

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 24, 25, 36 and 39-40 have been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to correct dependency.

Claims 26-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph on the grounds that, in the opinion of the Examiner, "one or more *secondary transmission media* is not found in the specification" (emphasis added). Applicants respectfully disagree. First, an important point of novelty of this invention is the ability to integrate and select among channels derived through various transmission media into a cohesive viewing environment. Reference is made to the Summary of the Invention, where it is disclosed that "a system controller, which accepts control signals from a standard infrared-type hand-held remote-controller, handles such tasks as input selection and channel switching, and allows the user to reassign channel designations at will, *even including input switching as part of the channel selection.*" "In a preferred embodiment, the unit may be provided with additional tuner provisions associated with any of the various inputs ..." (page 3, lines 3-5). "All of these input sources are demodulated and provided to the audio/video switching matrix as baseband audio and video signals, enabling signal routing within the audio/video switching matrix to be implemented a baseband video 'bus.'" (Specification, page 4, lines 16-20.)

Thus, clearly to one of ordinary skill in the art, channels on primary vs. secondary transmission media may be selected at will, without regard to origin. This understanding is corroborated by the claims of this application *as originally filed* on June 8, 1995, a copy of which are attached hereto as Exhibit A. Reference is made to original claim 1, which not only discloses the ability to switch between a broadcast-frequency and cable TV program in accordance with viewer preferences, but also the capability of selectively routing a program from any of the

associated inputs. Based upon these teachings, the instant claims are certainly enabled to one of skill in the art.

Claims 18-25 and 34-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Hofmann ('677). However, apart from the inapplicability of this reference, the Hofmann patent is not prior art. The earliest priority date of Hofmann is March 13, 1995. The instant invention claims priority of a parent application filed on June 8, 1995, but the inventors conceived of the idea prior to the filing date of Hofmann, and proceeded to diligently reduce the invention to practice, culminating with the filing of Serial No. 08/488,691, as set forth in the accompanying affidavit by co-inventor John G. Posa, plus exhibits.

Based upon the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims are in condition for allowance. Questions regarding this application may be directed to the undersigned at the telephone/facsimile numbers provided. Attached is a version showing the changes made to the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADEIN THE CLAIMS:

24. (Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein [the pointer] data used to change the channel is transmitted continuously with the TV program.

25. (Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein [the pointer] data used to change the channel is transmitted at the initiation of the TV program.

36. (Amended) The system of claim [34] 35, wherein:

the device is a hand-held remote-control unit; and

the descriptive information is entered using an on-screen programming technique.

39. (Amended) The system of claim [34] 35, wherein the descriptive information is transmitted continuously with the TV program.

40. (Amended) The system of claim [34] 35, wherein the descriptive information is transmitted at the initiation of the TV program.

A

1. A system for integrating a plurality of television signal sources into a cohesive viewing environment, the system comprising:

a standard broadcast-frequency television input
5 and an associated multi-channel tuner operative to selectively tune a broadcast television program;

a cable television input and an associated multi-channel tuner operative to selectively tune a cable television program;

10 an output to deliver a video program to display device;

a user command input device;

means for storing information representative of channel designations; and

15 a system controller operative to perform the following functions in response to a user commands:

assign and re-assign user-defined channels designations to channels present on any of the associated inputs, and store the designations for future use, and

20 selectively route a television program from any of the associated inputs to the output for viewing on the display device, the switching of a particular input being a function of the user-defined channel designations.

2. The system of claim 1, the cable tuner
25 further including a descrambler module for premium services.

3. The system of claim 1, further including:
a direct-broadcast-satellite (DBS) television

input and an associated multi-channel tuner operative to selectively tune a DBS program, the controller being further operative to assign and store user-defined DBS channels designations and selectively route the DBS program
5 to the output for viewing on the display device in accordance with the channel designations.

4. The system of claim 1, further including a telephone interface to facilitate an automatic account transaction associated with a pay-per-view program.

10 5. The system of claim 1, further including:
an input to receive a previously locally stored video program, the controller being further operative to selectively route the program to the output for viewing on the display device.

15 6. The system of claim 1, the output including separate baseband audio and video outputs.

7. The system of claim 1, further including an input to receive a digital program in data compressed form and means for selectively digitally decompressing the
20 program prior to delivery to the display device.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein one or more additional channels carry supplemental program information, the system being further capable of automatically determining at least one of the additional channels and
25 tuning that channel so as to output the program along with

the supplemental information.

9. The system of claim 8, the additional channel carrying supplemental information to facilitate higher-resolution viewing of the program.

5 10. The system of claim 9, including supplemental information associated with one eye of the viewer to facilitate stereoscopic viewing.

11. The system of claim 8, the additional channel carrying supplemental audio information.

10 12. The system of claim 8, wherein the system is capable of automatically determining at least one of the additional channels by extracting a supplemental channel information from a program channel.

15 13. The system of claim 12, wherein the supplemental channel information is carried by the program channel on a repetitive basis in a non-viewable portion of program signal.

14. The system of claim 12, wherein the supplemental channel information is carried by the program
20 channel only at the start of a particular program.

15. The system of claim 12, wherein the supplemental channel information changes during the receipt

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of a particular program to which supplemental information may be associated.

16. The system of claim 8, wherein the system is capable of automatically determining at least one of the
5 additional channels by receiving a code containing additional channel information.

17. The system of claim 8, further including a plurality of outputs associated with a program and supplemental information, enabling a user to record a
10 program received from a program channel and one or more additional channels.